

## Relationship Between ELPT™ and TOEFL Performance: A Preliminary Analysis

The College Board conducted a survey of students who took the ELPT™ test in 1996 and 1997. The survey yielded responses from 141 students with self-reported TOEFL scores. The results suggest a strong, near linear relationship between students' performance levels on these two English language proficiency instruments. The correlation between ELPT and TOEFL scores in the sample data was .81, corrected for range restriction in the response sample (See Tables 1 and 2 below). Because TOEFL scores in this study are likely to contain errors related to self-reporting, and because it was impossible to control the time interval between testings, the correlation measured in this study is, in all likelihood, lower than true correlation between ELPT and TOEFL scores in the population.

Scaled scores on ELPT (with a range of 900 to 999) were equated to scaled scores on TOEFL (with a range of 200 to 677) at nine percentile levels evenly distributed across the performance of students in the sample. The population percentile levels for these nine pairs of anchors appear in Table 3. Figure 1 shows that the equated points correspond to very similar national percentile ranks at both the upper and lower end of the performance spectrum. However, the middle of the performance range is shifted toward slightly higher national percentile levels for TOEFL. This means that students with scores near the average score (on either test)

**TABLE 1**

Values from Sample Data	ELPT	TOEFL
Mean	966.2	557.2
Minimum	922	390
Maximum	995	670
Standard Deviation	17.0	59.6
Number of Scores	141	141

**TABLE 2**

Correlation Between ELPT and TOEFL Scores	Uncorrected	Corrected
	.754	.81

would be assigned a slightly lower ELPT percentile as compared with their TOEFL percentile, based on the respective national norms.

The data from this study should be considered preliminary and should be used with caution. The relationships depicted in Figure 1 and in Table 3 should not be used to convert existing scores from one scale to another. Nor should the data from this study be used to directly modify an existing placement or admission formula, based on TOEFL scores, to accommodate scores from ELPT. It should also be kept in mind that the sample on

**TABLE 3**
**Equated Scores From Sample Data<sup>1</sup>**

Actual National TOEFL Percentile	TOEFL Score	ELPT Score	Actual National ELPT Percentile
20	470	941	20
35	503	950	32
51	530	956	43
61	547	963	53
67	558	968	63
76	577	972	70
82	590	978	81
89	610	983	89
95	633	987	94

<sup>1</sup>Results were obtained from a nonrepresentative sample of 141 students who took the ELPT and provided self-reported TOEFL scores. These data are considered preliminary and should be used with caution. Please see text for guidance on using these tables.

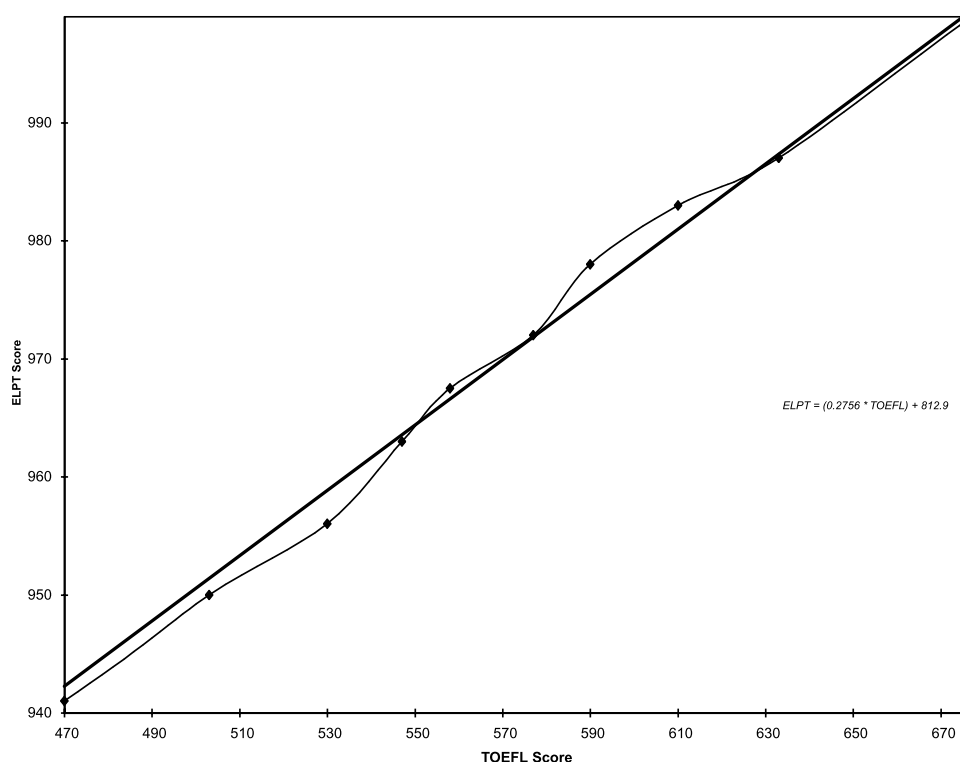


Figure 1. Score equivalences in data sample (with best fit line and equation).

which these results are based is not necessarily representative of all students who take the ELPT or of all students who take the TOEFL.

Although this preliminary study is not sufficiently comprehensive to establish a final concordance table, the near linear relationship between scaled scores earned on ELPT and scaled scores earned on TOEFL allows for several conclusions. First, Figure 1 reveals that the nine equipercentile equating points from this sample fall very close to a straight line. The trendline pictured in Figure 1 accounts for over 99 percent of the variability in the 9 equating points. Second, the correlational findings suggest that ELPT and TOEFL measure very similar skills, and that it will be possible to construct a highly accurate concordance from a more controlled study involving a larger number of test-takers. Third, although conversion of individual scores is not recommended at this time, it is appropriate to use Figure 1 and Table 3 to help

establish initial guidelines for using ELPT scores. For example, if your college typically requires a TOEFL score of 540 or above, you might consider using an ELPT score of 960 as a similar guideline for admission or placement purposes.

A full concordance study is currently being planned, in which a larger number of representative students are taking ELPT and TOEFL in a controlled counterbalanced environment and over a short span of intervening time. The results of this study will be reported as soon as the study is complete. Because this study will not rely on self-reported TOEFL scores, and because the length of time between testings will be short, it is expected that the concordance study will lead to a more accurate assessment of the relationship between individual ELPT and TOEFL scores. A final concordance table will be made available after completion of the full-scale study.

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